



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: June 10, 2021 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM – Virtual Meeting

WCHAC Members Present: Hadrian Starr, Diana Phair, Deanna Wildermuth, Teri Bryant, Brien Thane, Samya Lutz, Kyle Christensen, Satpal Sidhu, Tara Sundin, Michael Jones, Anne Deacon, Dean Fearing

WCHAC Members Absent: Ashley Thomasson, Karen Burke, Marc Walker

Whatcom Co. Health Dept. Staff/Guests: Chris D’Onofrio, Barbara Johnson-Vinna, Ashley Geleynse, Dena Jensen, Paul Schissler, Michael Lilliquist

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
A. Call to order, introductions	Introductions commenced and quorum present.	Brien
B. Minutes Approval April 2021 Minutes Approval	Chris recommended that an amendment be made to the minutes in reference to 1590 funding. The bill reads that at least 60% must be used for affordable housing, and the remaining funds may be used for housing related behavioral health services. Anne moved that the minutes from the April meeting be approved. Satpal seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed.	Ayes: 9 Abstain: 2 Motion Passed
C. Agenda Review	No proposed amendments to the agenda.	Brien
D. Reports/Discussion 1. Homeless Strategies Workgroup Recommendations 2. 1590, 1406, and Affordable Housing Development	Anne gave a report on the Homeless Strategies Workgroup’s recommendations presented to City and County Councils, outlining action steps going forward. This committee has been tasked by County Council to provide oversight for the ongoing progress of the recommendations. Each meeting, staff will report on the progress of recommendations, followed by discussion. The county has added a young adult shelter to the list of recommendations, and is working on that with Northwest Youth Services. Anne reviewed the county’s outline for activity, funding source, funding allocation and timeline for two sources of funding available for affordable housing: 1406, the Affordable & Supportive Housing Fund; and 1590, Sales and	Anne



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3. BWA Samish Commons Project	<p>Use Tax for Housing and Related Services. The City of Bellingham also passed 1590, and will collect approximately \$3M/year, so county staff recommend focusing their 1590 dollars on constructing or rehabbing affordable housing units outside of the City of Bellingham.</p> <p>The committee discussed the reallocation of 1406 funds for rental assistance, since more dollars are coming to the county for rental assistance from federal resources. The committee previously voted to set aside 60% for rental assistance over 2021 and 2022. Samya moved to have a reserve in the fund balance of 10% over 2021 and 2022 for rental assistance, to be refilled as needed to maintain a reserve of 10%. Tara Sundin seconded the motion. It was clarified that if the 10% goes unused, it will roll over into the next year, the reserve will not grow. It was clarified that with the passing of this motion, there will be enough money in the 1406 fund balance to fund what's needed for the Samish Commons project. The committee voted, and the motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>City staff plans to propose assistance in filling some of the funding gap for the Samish Commons project through a housing levy and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars. County staff recommends using 1406 dollars to cover the remaining portion of the gap, up to \$525k. Jenny Weinstein from the Bellingham Whatcom Housing Authority gave a brief presentation on the Samish Commons project. Tyler Schroeder recommended that if the committee moves forward with a vote on using 1406 to fulfill the funding gap, that county administration then engage with county council about using ARPA dollars as a preferred funding source.</p>	<p>Anne</p> <p>Ayes: 12 Abstain: 0 Motion Passed</p>
4. 2060 Report	<p>Tara made a motion to utilize \$525k of 1406 to support filling the gap at Samish Commons, and ask that the county administration discuss utilization of the ARPA dollars as a substitute. Michael seconded. The committee voted and motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Barbara shared the annual 2060 fund report, submitted to the County Executive and all seven Whatcom mayors. County staff plan to include 1406 funds in future reports to more closely align with the interlocal agreement between the county and the seven cities. County staff will also continue to report annually on how funding sources are braided together into contracts, and which funding sources can be used for which purposes.</p>	<p>Ayes: 12 Abstain: 0 Motion Passed</p> <p>Barbara, Anne</p>
5. Eviction Prevention Funding and New Eviction Laws	<p>Chris reviewed a flyer that includes financial, legal, and mediation assistance to help with eviction prevention, available in five languages. The eviction moratorium is still on track to end at the end of the month.</p>	<p>Chris</p>

WHATCOM COUNTY
Health Department



Erika Lautenbach, Director
Greg Stern, M.D., Health Officer

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
6. FWC & Motel Spending	Anne shared that supporting motel stays for families with children continues, and a major challenge in our community is having enough case managers to help families transition into more permanent housing situations. City and county staff meet weekly to plan and implement effective resolutions to this issue and other housing challenges. City and county staff will more thoroughly report out about strategies at the next meeting.	Anne
7. WHSC Update	The Whatcom Homeless Service Center (WHSC) is recruiting for an opiate substance use disorder specialist to join the Homeless Outreach Team. The WHSC landlord liaison is innovatively delivering mobile services, participating in outreach to landlords, as well as consulting with people in public places.	Teri
E. Public Comment	Dena Jensen, Paul Schissler, and Michael Lilliquist gave public comment.	
F. ADJOURN		Brien
<i>NEXT MEETING</i>	Next regular meeting August 12th, 2021, 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. <u>VIRTUAL</u>	